




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Robert Spillar, P.E., Director 
Austin Transportation Department

DATE: February 25, 2022

SUBJECT: Staff Response to Resolution No. 20200610-002 - 2021 Austin Strategic Mobility Plan Amendments

This memo serves as an update on the 2021 Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) Amendment process. Previous status updates were provided via memos on [6/10/2021](#), [9/30/2021](#) and [12/1/2021](#). As referenced in these memos, the initial round of public comments was carried out in two phases, with phase one beginning on October 1, 2021. This phase included the release of a policy amendment survey related to transportation resilience and the expanded use of our streets for non-mobility uses. On November 15, 2021, the second phase of the public comment period began with the release of changes to the ASMP Street Network Map, including those related to Project Connect. This initial round of public comments was scheduled to close on December 31, 2021, but was extended an additional month to January 30, 2022 to provide the community additional time to review and comment on the ASMP amendment proposals.

The ASMP team has summarized this first round of feedback and will be publishing an updated draft of the proposed amendments at the end of February. The community will be invited to provide additional comments on the updated draft throughout March and during Boards and Commissions meetings. Feedback received during this second round of comments will be summarized in April and will be presented to the Planning Commission in early May for their recommendation to City Council. A final draft of the proposed amendments will then be presented to City Council where a Public Hearing will be held and the amendments will be considered for adoption.

The following provides more detail on the next steps in the amendment process, as well as the top issues discussed in the first round of comments.

Remaining Feedback Schedule

A redlined version of the ASMP document with proposed amendments and a summary of comments received during the first round was published as backup on February 25, 2022 for the March 10, 2022 Council Mobility Committee. The ASMP website will be updated at the end of February to include this backup and an updated draft of the proposed Street Network amendments. The website will include additional information and provide an opportunity for the community to comment on the proposed Street Network Amendments throughout March. Notifications for this second round of comments will be sent out to the Community Registry. Austin Transportation Department (ATD) is scheduled to brief various Boards and Commissions and Council Mobility Committee throughout March:

3/1/2022: Urban Transportation Commission
3/7/2022: Pedestrian Advisory Council
3/8/2022: Planning Commission
3/10/2022: Council Mobility Committee
3/15/2022: Bicycle Advisory Council
3/29/2022: Zoning and Platting Commission

The second round of public comments will conclude at the end of March. Feedback will be summarized and presented to the Comprehensive Plan Joint Committee in April and Planning Commission in May where they will make their recommendation to City Council.

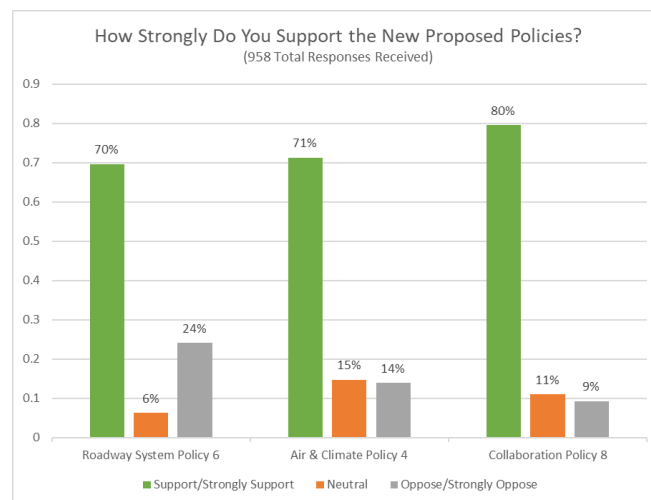
A final draft of the proposed amendments will be published in May before holding a Public Hearing at City Council, as required by Austin City Charter. The Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled to be set at Council's April 21 meeting and then the Public Hearing is to be held tentatively at the May 19 Council Meeting. The City Council will then be able to consider the amendments for adoption at the June 9 meeting in all three readings or over multiple meetings.

Summary of First Round Public Comments

The first round of public comments gathered feedback on three proposed new policies using a survey, proposed map amendments in a feedback map, and via emails sent to the ASMP inbox. The following highlights the primary feedback we received during this round of comments.

New Policies:

Two policies related to transportation resilience (Air & Climate Policy 4 and Collaboration Policy 8) and one related to the expanded use of our streets for non-mobility uses (Roadway System Policy 6) were presented to the public to weigh in on. Survey results indicate that there is general support for adding these policies to the ASMP. There were 958 total survey responses received. See chart below.



Street Level changes:

Feedback received in the map and via emails indicate there were concerns about some streets in established neighborhoods being reclassified as Level 2 from a Level 1 street. These changes were proposed to account for the recommendations in the 2014 Bicycle Plan to add bicycle lanes. However,

many of the concerns were based on the misunderstanding that the City would need to condemn property to expand the roadway to make these improvements.

Based on this feedback, these changes have been removed in the updated draft of the proposed amendments. We removed these amendments for two reasons, 1) the changes are based on the 2014 Bicycle Plan which is currently being updated through the ATX Walk Bike Roll process, and 2) any improvements in the future to roadways in established neighborhoods would be made within the existing pavement without acquiring additional right of way (ROW) from single-family homes. Therefore, the updated draft proposes to keep Street Levels within established neighborhoods as they were adopted in 2019 in order to address concerns about the expanded ROW. However, streets in areas that may experience new or intensive redevelopment have been identified and the proposed amendments have been carried forward in order to preserve the ability to acquire ROW through dedication *if* private land development occurs. These street segments have been identified based on existing non-single family land uses, zoning, and future land use maps (FLUM). These street segments serve as the gateways into the neighborhood and would require new development to dedicate space and incorporate the street design requirements in the TCM to provide safe travel choices to all road users on the street.

Transit Priority Network changes:

Some concerns were expressed about the intent and purpose behind the proposed changes to the Transit Priority Network. The Transit Priority Network is being updated to reflect the final alignments in the adopted Project Connect System Plan and updated High-Frequency Transit service routes. All transit service routes that operate at a 15-minute frequency or better are included in the Transit Priority Network in order to identify where transit priority treatments should be focused, such as transit signal priority or transit only lanes. However, the Transit Priority Network does not grant new rights to allow more intensive development not currently allowed under existing zoning conditions.

A full report on the first round of public comments can be found at AustinTexas.gov/ASMP. Many of the map comments resulted in changes being made in the updated draft of the Street Network amendments. The second round of public comments is an opportunity to discuss the proposed changes further so that the final draft of the proposed amendments reflects the preferences of the community with the highest level of support possible.

The ASMP team will continue to work closely with Council Offices to respond to questions and concerns from the community. If there are any questions related to the amendment process, please contact Cole Kitten, Systems Development Division Manager, at 512-974-6442 or Cole.Kitten@austintexas.gov.

CC: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Gina Fiandaca, Assistant City Manager, Mobility